

**NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL HIGHWAYS**

**A SYNOPSIS OF HIGHWAY AID AVAILABLE TO MUNICIPALITIES**

**HIGHWAY AID FUNDS**

Highway aid to municipalities is included in the State Highway Budget in accordance with provisions set forth in the Statutes. Utilization of the several types of aid follows:

**State Aid Funds for Class I, II, and III Highways** (RSA 235:10-:21) are provided for the purpose of constructing or reconstructing sections of Class I, II, and III highways. This work, when requested by a municipality, would include improvements to unimproved sections of State secondary, Class II highways and Class III highways or to advance the priority of construction for special types of work such as improving drainage, riding surface, or elimination of sharp curves on Class I highways or improved sections of Class II highways.

Preliminary discussions between the municipality and the State (to include the District Engineer and the Municipal Highways Administrator) should be conducted to determine whether a desired improvement qualifies for Program funding. If a project qualifies, a determination is made as to how to prepare a cost estimate, which forms the basis of State/municipality's anticipated funding required.

With provision of an estimate to the municipality, an Application for Construction or Reconstruction must be made to the Municipal Highways Administrator by May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Application shall state that the municipality has raised, appropriated, or set aside its contributions for State Aid. Forms are available on the Department's Web Site ([www.nhdot.com](http://www.nhdot.com) "Business Center"), in the District offices, or from the Administrator, Bureau of Municipal Highways (telephone 271-2107; email [bureau19@dot.state.nh.us](mailto:bureau19@dot.state.nh.us)).

The municipality shall pay one-third (1/3) of the cost and the State shall pay two-thirds (2/3) of the cost. Fifty percent (50%) of the municipality's contribution for State Aid shall be remitted to the Commissioner of Transportation before any State Aid project is begun and the balance shall be remitted upon completion of the project. The reverse applies when the project is approved to be municipally-managed (see "Process for Municipally-Managed State Aid Highway Program Project").

**Bridge Aid Funds** (RSA 234) consist of both State and Federal Highway Funds budgeted for construction or reconstruction of structures on Class IV and Class V highways as well as municipally-maintained bridges on Class II highways. Structures having a clear span of ten (10) feet or greater qualify for State Bridge Aid funds. Federal funds may be utilized for structures having a span of 20 feet or greater. The ratio for the aid is 80% Federal or State and 20% municipality. Construction of Class II bridges transfers the maintenance responsibility from the municipality to the State. Also see "Process for Bridge Aid Municipally-Managed Projects".

All bridges rehabilitated (except covered bridges) with Bridge Aid Funds shall have a carrying capacity of at least 15 tons. Replacement bridges constructed with Bridge Aid Funds shall have a carrying capacity of at least the legal load as stipulated in RSA 266.

Applications for Preliminary Estimates must be made on forms available on the Department's Web Site ([www.nhdot.com](http://www.nhdot.com) "Business Center"), in the District offices, or from the Administrator,

Bureau of Municipal Highways (telephone 271-2107; email [bureau19@dot.state.nh.us](mailto:bureau19@dot.state.nh.us)). Submission of the Application should be made early in the year to allow the necessary time for field review and estimate preparation. An estimate will be prepared and submitted for approval by local officials before work begins.

Rehabilitation of covered bridges is possible under the Bridge Aid Program; however, such improvement must be of a nature that will provide a minimum six-ton carrying capacity as compared to 15-ton capacity in other categories. Expenditures under this provision cannot exceed the cost of constructing a standard type bridge (RSA 234).

**Highway Block Grant Aid Funds** (RSA 235:23 & :25) come from a portion of the total road toll and motor vehicle registration fees collected by the State and given to municipalities for the purpose of constructing, reconstructing, or maintaining Class IV and V highways. These funds are apportioned to all municipalities on a yearly basis as follows:

Apportionment A: These funds are allocated from an annual apportionment of not less than 12% of the total highway revenues collected the preceding fiscal year. The amount distributed is based on one-half (1/2) mileage and one-half (1/2) population as the city/town factors bear to the State total.

Apportionment B: These funds are allocated from an annual apportionment of \$400,000. The amount available to municipalities is based on a formula using equalized valuation and Class V mileage and is designed to give the greatest benefit to municipalities with low, equalized valuations and high road mileage.

Block Grant Aid payments are made as follows: 30% in July, 30% in October, 20% in January, and 20% in April. Unused balances may be carried over to the following municipal fiscal year.

**Contribution to Damage Losses** (RSA 235:34) is available to any municipality which suffers damage to its highways through a disaster which is estimated to exceed one-eighth (1/8) of one percent (1%) of its assessed valuation providing the Commissioner of Transportation is notified and requested to investigate the damage. Aid of this nature shall be computed on that amount in excess of one-eighth (1/8) of one percent (1%) of assessed valuation but shall not exceed 75% of the cost of the damage in excess of this amount.

There are no Emergency Funds in the State Highway Budget at this time.

## **BRIDGE INSPECTION**

Inspection of bridges (RSA 234:21-:25) on all Class IV and V highways and municipally-maintained bridges on Class II highways is required on a two-year basis. Municipalities must keep records of the inspections. These inspections are a requisite for Bridge Aid.

The Department will inspect all municipal bridges every two years provided that sufficient qualified personnel are available to make these inspections. A copy of the inspection record will be supplied at no expense to the municipality.

## **PERSONAL SERVICES**

In addition to the several forms of financial aid, the Department is allowed to provide certain forms of personal services.

**Requested Maintenance and Repair Projects** for municipal roads, bridges, or other property used in connection with highways may be made available at cost. A written request stating the work to be accomplished must be submitted to the Commissioner of Transportation. An estimate will be prepared and submitted for approval by local officials before work begins. Upon completion of the work, the municipality will be invoiced for costs and expected to pay said Invoice within 30 days after receipt thereof (RSA 228:49).

**Engineering Services** for the purpose of consultation and advice on matters pertaining to highways and bridges may be made available upon written request to the Commissioner of Transportation (RSA 228:45).